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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in view of the final Office Action dated April 21, 2005. Claims 1-11 are pending in the application, with claims 1, 4-7, 10 and 11 being in independent form. By this Amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to place the claims in better form for reconsideration, without introducing any new issues and/or any new matter.

Claims 1-3 and 5-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,104,504 to Imai et al in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,442,686 to Wada et al. Claims 4 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Imai in view of Wada, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,384,927 to Mori.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 4-7, 10 and 11 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

The present application relates to facsimile communications operation by a receiving (or called) facsimile apparatus with the capability of using optional frames. Generally, use of optional frames is not required and there is not a required manner in which the optional frame must be used. While some manufacturers of such facsimile machines have agreed to a common specification on the usage of the optional frames, other manufacturers are not parties to the agreement and may produce facsimile machines that do not conform to the common specification of optional frames. There may be problems in communications operation between a facsimile machine which adheres to the common specification of optional frames and another facsimile

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machine which does not adhere to the common specification.

A called facsimile machine according to the claimed invention reduces the risks of error in communication with a calling facsimile machine which does not adhere to the common specifications of optional frames, by checking the identification information of the calling facsimile machine which identifies the calling facsimile machine. If the calling machine identification information does not correspond with prestored identification information for the different machines which adopt the common specification of optional frames, optional frames are not used by the receiving facsimile machine for facsimile communications with the calling facsimile machine. On the other hand, if the calling machine identification information corresponds to the prestored identification information, facsimile communications operation using the optional frame is performed by the receiving facsimile machine.

Imai, as understood by Applicant, is directed to use by a calling station of a selective polling signal (SEP).

As acknowledged in the Office Action, Imai does not disclose or suggest that the identification information of the calling facsimile machine identifies the calling facsimile machine.

In addition, it should be noted that Imai also does not disclose or suggest that the identification information of the calling facsimile machine is used to determine whether to use optional frames in the facsimile communications operation, that is, even if optional frames are not used (because the calling machine identification information does not

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correspond with prestored identification information for the different machines which adopt the common specification of optional frames), facsimile communications operation proceeds using normal facsimile communications procedures (i.e. without use of optional frames), as provided by the claimed invention.

Imai discloses assignment of a document sheet number by a calling station to a polling document sheet for a destination station, when the polling document sheet is stored in a queue. Imai further discloses that the document sheet number can include the telephone number of the destination (i.e. called station).

In step S110 of Imai, a received SEP signal is analyzed, the document sheet number set in the calling receiving station is read, the document sheet designated by the document sheet number is collated with the document sheet number of the document sheet in the queue. If there is a matching document sheet, the document sheet is transmitted in step S111, and if there is no matching document sheet, the absence of a document sheet is announced to the calling receiving station and the process is terminated.

Thus, document sheet number is not used to determine whether to use optional frames or proceed with normal facsimile communications procedures.

Wada, as understood by Applicant, is directed to an image communication apparatus adapted with an identification device for detecting a telephone number of a calling station terminal when a call is received by the image communication apparatus from the calling station terminal, and then storing the telephone number of the calling station terminal even if image communication cannot be established because, for example, an operator of the called

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image communication apparatus is not present or the called image communication apparatus does not have sufficient paper for recording the image to be transmitted (i.e. out of paper).

Wada at column 5, lines 23-61 discloses that when a call is received by the called facsimile machine from the calling station terminal, the calling station identification information is extracted and stored, and then if the called facsimile machine cannot receive the image communication the called facsimile machine sends a DCN signal including a PIF field indicating that the called facsimile machine is out of paper (i.e. "no record sheet is set").

Wada, like Imai, does not disclose or suggest using the identification information of the calling facsimile machine to determine whether to use optional frames or proceed with normal facsimile communications procedures.

Mori, as understood by Applicant, is directed to an Internet facsimile machine which stores subaddress information associated with destination terminals and mail addresses of Internet facsimile machines which provide a repeater operation for information destined to the terminal associated with a specified subaddress.

Column 10, lines 1-6 of Mori discloses use of a Group 3 facsimile modem. Column 11, line 33 through column 13, line 18 discloses a process executed by the repeater machine for transmitting image information received from an ordinary facsimile machine through a Group 3 reception procedure via the international PSTN, to a second repeater machine, including converting subaddress information to a domestic telephone number, if applicable.

Applicant does not find teaching or suggestion in the cited art, however, of comparing the calling machine identification information with the prestored identification

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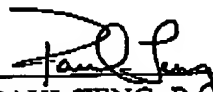
information for the different machines which adopt the common specification of optional frames, to determine whether to use optional frames or proceed with normal facsimile communications procedures, as provided by the claimed invention of the pending claims.

In view of the claim amendments and remarks above, and this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required in connection with this response and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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